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## Trends. Bahtmen to the Rescue: A Psychology of Altruism in Thailand

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Trends. Bahtmen to the Rescue: A Psychology of Altruism in Thailand

Do unto others as thou wouldst have them do unto you. A way to live one's life? Maybe. But if this saying underlies how we live, there is no way to help others that is not instrumental or modeling behavior geared to help the self.

A case in point is the recent billion dollar rescue of the Thai financial system and its currency, the baht. Yes, the Thai government is being helped. But so are the helpers. (1) Thailand may be more easily able to pay for imports. (2) Thai foreign debt obligations may be more likely met. (3) The currency crisis that has been affecting Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and threatening other Asian countries may be more easily managed through convincing currency speculators that the International Monetary Fund and a group of Asian countries will do what's necessary for international and collective Asian welfare. (4) Foreign investors may more likely continue to depend on Thailand as a significant regional manufacturing and export base.

So, should altruism as opposed to egoism be considered a political psychological motivation? Does political socialization emphasizing altruism instead of or along with egoism help or hinder individual citizens and the citizenry constituting a country? Do Batman, bahtmen, sinners, and saints vary along these dimensions? They do in fairy tales, myths, and ideologies. (See Batson, C.D. (1994.) Why act for the public good? Four answers. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 603-610; Burnsetin, E., Crandall, C., & Kitayama, S. (1994.) Some neo-Darwinian decision rules for altruism: Weighing cues for inclusive fitness as a function of the biological importance of the decision. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 773-789; Krebs, D.L., & Van Hesteren, F. (1994.) The development of altruism: Toward an integrative model. *Developmental Review*, 14, 103-158; Pollack, A. (August 12, 1997.) Japan joins I.M.F.'s rescue of Thailand, \$16 billion in all. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Stern, P.C. (1996.) Nationalism as reconstructed altruism. *Political Psychology*, 17, 569-572; Teske, N. (1997.) Beyond altruism: Identity-construction as moral motive in political explanation. *Political Psychology*, 18, 71-91.)(Keywords: Altruism, Thailand, Encryption)